

The University of Chicago

THE PLANTATION

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE
SOCIAL SCIENCES IN CANDIDACY FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

1932

By

EDGAR TRISTRAM THOMPSON

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CHAPTER ONE
THE PLANTATION AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION

Introduction

The problem of the plantation, whose lusty revival in tropical countries we are now witnessing, is a part of the larger problem of what Teggart calls "politicization," the process of state-making, of bringing men under new and more stringent forms of control.¹

Concerning the state there are a large number of interpretations, and many explanations of classes, castes, and forms of forced labor, such as slavery, have been advanced. But there is very little in the literature of social science that might be called a theory of the plantation. Any effort to supply such a theory will face at the outset certain fundamental questions: What is a plantation? Why does the plantation arise in some areas and not in others? What is the natural history, i.e., the cycle of change, of this institution? Concerning questions of this sort, answers have come mainly from students of colonization. These students have, in general, sought to explain the plantation mainly in terms of climatic influences or causes.²

It is the thesis of this study that the plantation is to be regarded as a political institution which has a natural history

¹Frederick J. Teggart, The Processes of History (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1918), p. 91.

²A. G. Keller, Colonization (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1908), Chap. I; Wilhelm Roscher und Robert Jannasch, Kolonien, Kolonialpolitik, und Auswanderung (Leipzig, 1885), pp. 23-24; Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, De la Colonization chez les Peuples Modernes (Paris, 1902), II, 563-593.

very much like that of other types of political institutions as, for instance, the state. The plantation, so far as it may be regarded as a political institution, is one that exists for the purpose of bringing land into new and higher uses through the medium of an agricultural staple which is sold on the metropolitan market. The plantation arises out of settlement, out of the contact and collision of diverse racial and cultural groups on a frontier, as a means of maintaining and realizing original economic purposes. It acquires its institutional characteristics in the process of meeting and finding some sort of solutions to its most persistent problems: the problem of operating at a profit and of getting and controlling an adequate supply of cheap labor. Its purposes are industrial; its means for achieving these purposes are political. It is a political institution in so far as it introduces, or evolves, and enforces order where there has been disorder and uncertainty among individuals who have been torn out of former group relations and left disorganized and unattached. The plantation arises as the personal "possession" of the planter who is able to acquire it, to enforce his authority, and incidentally, to compose conflicts and settle individuals on the land. In the process an aristocracy and a peasantry are established with appropriate attitudes of loyalty, responsibility, and control.

Amid a multitude of details and a variety of entangled considerations of general interest the theme we seek to keep clearly before the reader is that the plantation is an incident in the conquest, settlement, and exploitation of a frontier area, and that its changes mark the changes in the frontier itself. The general process in which the plantation originates and develops is designated by Teggart politicization.

Politicization, on its objective side, seems to denote a relative transition from a form of society in which the collective force is diffuse and whose integrating principle is consanguineous or totemic, to another in which power is usurped by, or delegated to, particular individuals, or a class of individuals, and whose unity is based upon locality. For the understanding of how human institutions have come to be as they are the importance of this transition can hardly be exaggerated. Or such was the conviction of Sir Henry Maine:

The history of political ideas begins with the assumption that kinship is the sole possible ground of community in political functions; nor is there any of those subversions of feeling, which we term emphatically revolutions, so startling and so complete as the change which is accomplished when some other principle--such as that, for instance, of local contiguity--establishes itself for the first time as the basis of common political action.¹

For Teggart, the problem of politicization arose in connection with his inquiry into the proper uses of history in the study of how man and his institutions have come to be as they are, or, more abstractly, of historical events in relation to social change. It is observed that "political organization is an exceptional thing, characteristic only of certain groups, and that all peoples whatsoever have once been or still are organized on a different basis."² Various theories that have been proposed in explanation of the fact that political institutions are unequally distributed among the peoples of the earth, are examined and rejected by Teggart. Two of these are the familiar theories of geographical and of racial determinism.³ Teggart's point of

¹Sir Henry Maine, Ancient Law, Fourteenth edition (London: John Murray, 1891), p. 129.

²Teggart, op. cit., p. 79.

³"These two theories have this in common, namely, that they both conceive civilization and society to be the result of

view, as an historian, is to accept man "as given," to leave aside all questions of innate differences, and to regard change as ensuing "upon a condition of relative fixity through the interposition of shock or disturbance induced by some exterior incident."¹ In migration is sought the major source of these shocks and disturbances.

Political institutions arise at the termini of routes of travel, at "points of pressure," where collision and conflict have broken up kindred groups.² Collision and conflict, in breaking up the older organization, have the effect of liberating the individual man from the customary dictation of his group. "...as a result of the breakdown of customary modes of action and of thought, the individual experiences a 'release' in aggressive self-assertion. The overexpression of individuality is one of the marked features of all epochs of change."³ This aggressive self-assertion and individual release

has been the necessary prelude to the emergence of territorial organization and the institution of personal ownership. However far apart these elements may appear in modern life, in the beginning they are identical, for the fundamental characteristic of political organization is the attitude of personal ownership assumed by the ruler toward the land and the population over which he has gained control--an attitude expressed to this day in the phrases 'my army' and 'my people'.....

The crucial point to be observed here is that kingship and territorial organization represent simply the institutionalization of a situation which arose out of the opportun-

evolutionary processes--processes by which man has acquired new inheritable traits--rather than processes by which new relations have been established between men." Robert E. Park, "Migrations and the Marginal Man," in E. W. Burgess, ed. Personality and the Social Group (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929), p. 64.

¹Teggart, op. cit., p. 155.

²Ibid., p. 49.

³Teggart, Theory of History (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1925), p. 196.

ity for personal self-assertion created by the breakup of primitive organizations and it should be understood that just as the relative stability of the older units follows from the fact that every human being is born into a given group and becomes assimilated to this in speech, manners, and ideas, so, in the new organization, the status quo operates to perpetuate itself, and the mere fact of its existence becomes an argument for regarding it as ordained by some super-mundane power. ¹

The Plantation Defined

The plantation, as here considered, is a large landed estate, located in an area of open resources, in which social relations between diverse racial or cultural groups are based upon authority, involving the subordination of resident laborers to a planter for the purpose of producing an agricultural staple which is sold in a world market.² In discussing the plantation we are, of course, not limiting ourselves to any one historic institution; rather we are dealing with the generic, the typical plantation. Each historic plantation area may show unique characteristics, but the above mentioned features they all hold in common. There are a number of social and economic organizations which, while closely related to the plantation, differ in one or more important respects from it. We may notice a few of these.

The manor represents a situation where economic self-sufficiency has entered the mores as something of an ideal and rent rather than profits is sought. Contrarily, the plantation depends upon the development of trade and transportation. But the manor actually has much the same history as the plantation. Both the lord and the planter exercise judicial functions and become eventually officials of the state.

The ranch is related to the plantation, but, because it

¹Teggart, Processes of History, pp. 88-89.

²The meanings of "open" resources and of "forced" labor are discussed later in the present chapter.

produces a commodity which ordinarily can transport itself to market, it is usually located further inland than is possible for commercial agriculture without cheap transportation. The ranch also is an institution for bringing land into new and higher uses. The labor economy of the ranch, however, diverges sharply from that of the plantation at the point where it becomes possible by means of mounted laborers to manage large numbers of live-stock. The cowboy, mounted, wild and free, has little in common with the routine stoop-laborers of the plantation.

The plantation differs from the so-called large power farm, such as is devoted to wheat cultivation on the Great Plains, by the presence of operations demanding a uniform type of unskilled labor. On the plantation machine methods for such operations either do not exist, or are uneconomic. In the absence of adequate seasonal labor it becomes necessary for the plantation to maintain sufficient labor throughout the year to meet the requirements of the peak.

The large agricultural mission is another way of bringing land into higher uses and exhibits another aspect of the process of politicization. Like the plantation it may produce staples for sale on the market, but the agricultural mission is fundamentally an institution maintained specifically for the assimilation and education of the native. Although the plantation is frequently justified as training in "regular work and healthy exercise," we may safely say that training and education are rarely serious motives of the planter in operating a plantation. The test of plantation success or failure is the return of the investment which it gives, and the predominance of motives other than those of profit-making is sufficient to change it into some other sort of institution. The plantation governs its membership, there-

fore, not for the glory of God, but for the material advancement of His planters. Nevertheless, although no part of the planter's motive, the plantation is a powerful agency of assimilation and acculturation.

The Plantation and Colonization

The history of the plantation is bound up with the discovery of new lands and the expansion of commerce, with the steamship, the railway, and other new means of transportation. It is bound up with the growth of colonies and cities, and of a world market. It is, in short, a colonial institution producing for the world market what the Germans call kolonialwaaren, i.e., sugar, spices, etc.¹ Colonization is one way of extending the community's frontier.

Students of urban institutions and areas, the slum, for instance, have found it necessary to understand each area and institution in the wider context of the entire urban community, the area over which there is competitive cooperation. Likewise the plantation, as a colonial institution, cannot adequately be understood apart from the economic and geographical coordinates which constitute the world community.

In the world-wide economic "web of life" peoples and regions maintain more or less specialized divisions of labor in an organization which is sometimes called the Great Economy. The Great Economy creates the occupational "places," or jobs, which are relatively stable and which a succession of individuals may fill. This is one ordinate of the world community. The other is the still more stable geographical base upon which the Great Economy is overlaid. By the world community we mean that

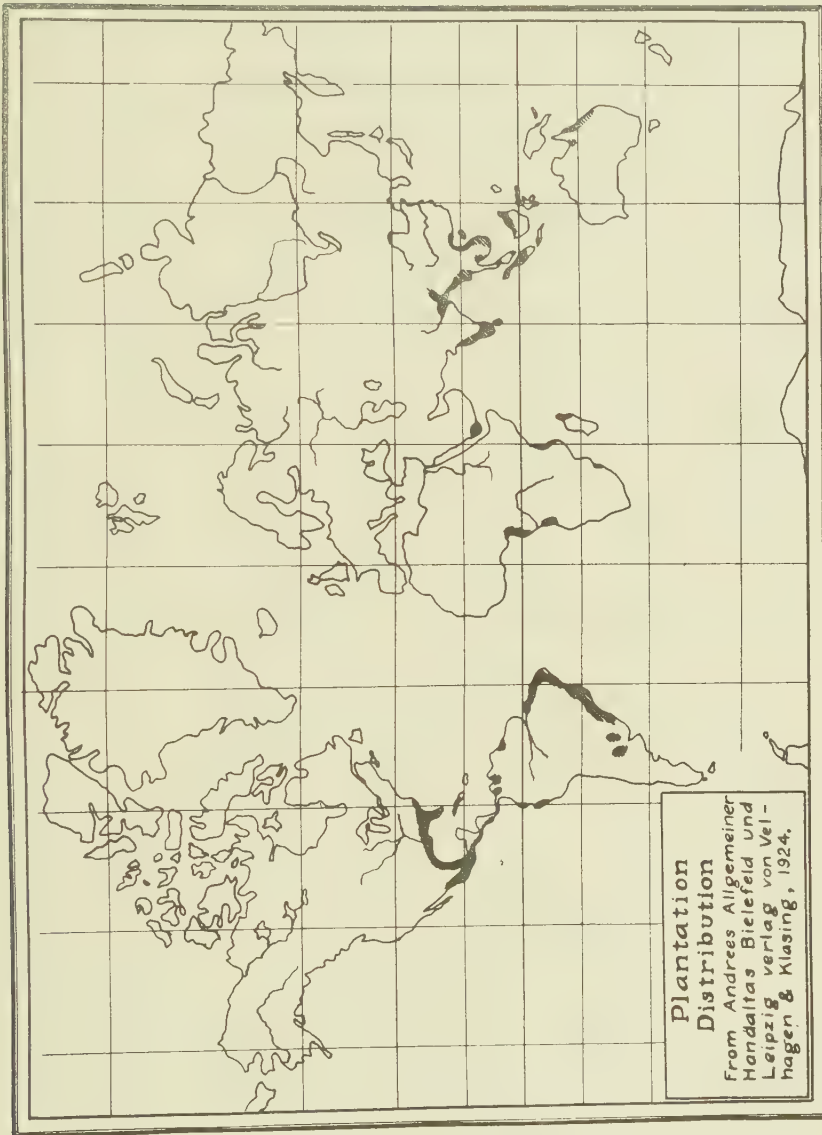
¹Roscher und Jannasch, op. cit., p. 23.

competitive and coöperative organization which is observed in the distribution of individuals, or groups of individuals, on the map, and which we seek to analyze into a system of spacial relationships between such individuals or groups of individuals. In the world community the location of institutions is seen not merely as a fact but as a problem, the problem of understanding the processes that determine their spacial position.

The accompanying map is intended to give some conception of the present distribution of plantations in the world community.¹ Plantation areas are predominantly in tropical or semi-tropical regions forming a belt about the equator all around the world. The almost absolute extent to which they are fixed on continental coasts and archipelagoes in this belt indicates their relation to cheap ocean transportation. It is only by way of the ocean that any commodity enters the world market; the world market exists, for one reason, because ocean transportation is relatively so cheap that competition becomes world-wide. It is no accident, therefore, that the islands of the East and West Indies, with easy access to cheap ocean transportation, have been among the most important centers of plantation agriculture.

The tropical and semi-tropical distribution of present plantations has suggested to certain students that the explanation

¹Data for the construction of a more accurate plantation map are not available. The first world agricultural census, taken in 1930, adopted no definition of the term "plantation" but grouped a considerable number of plants under the category "miscellaneous plantations." World Agricultural Census of 1930, Proposed standard form approved by the Ninth General Assembly, International Institute of Agriculture, Rome, Italy, p. 49. In a letter to the writer dated Oct. 25, 1930, Mr. H. Brizi, secretary general of the Institute, says: "I do not think that a map of the world showing plantation commodities exists, nor do I think it will be possible to construct a complete one with the data of this first world census, as such data are difficult to obtain for some countries and probably will only be obtained when the next census is taken."



of the plantation may be found in climatic influences or causes. As previously stated, such is the usual explanation of students of colonization. The work of Keller may briefly be considered as representative of this interpretation.¹

Many, if not most, of the varying geographical factors influencing the form and development of colonies are, according to Keller, finally correlated with differences in climate, and climate, for all practical purposes in the study of colonization, may be broadly divided into tropical and temperate. "...agriculture is the only important primary form of the industrial organization common to colonies of all latitudes and altitudes" and, therefore, is "the only criterion of classification of adequate generality, not to mention importance."² Agriculture is adjusted to climatic conditions with all variations between temperate and tropical climates. Colonies based upon temperate agriculture become farm colonies, whereas those based upon tropical agriculture are characteristically plantation colonies.

The temperate farm colony is marked by economic and administrative independence, democracy, and equality. Its unit of organization is the family, and the population is fairly well divided between the sexes. Hence there is little contact with native women and no mongrel population. The farm colony is also characterized by free labor.

The tropical plantation colony, on the other hand, presents a marked contrast to the temperate farm colony in almost every respect. "The colonists are few in number, they do not contemplate an extended stay, and are represented preponderatingly

¹Keller, op. cit., Chap. I.

²Ibid., p. 8.

by males: the racial unit is thus the individual, not the family."¹ In consequence, relations with native women produce a mixed-blood population. The motive of the colonists is to exploit the resources of the country for the home market, but since "vital conditions do not permit of the accomplishment of plantation labors at the hands of an unacclimatized race," laborers must be imported from other tropical regions if the natives cannot be coerced.² "Plantation colonies have regularly been the seats of wholesale enslavement," and the abolition of slavery leads only to various substitutes and subterfuges.³

These two opposing types of frontier agricultural organization grow out of differences in climate and in turn set up a different labor economy and a different social organization. This statement would seem to summarize Keller's explanation of the tropical or semi-tropical distribution of plantations. The limitations of the explanation as a theory of the plantation may be pointed out.

The plantation is a frontier institution which depends upon the development of trade, and the basis of trade lies in the exchangeable differences of peoples and areas. If the basis of trade is solely the difference in degree of industrial development between frontier and market, the exploitation of resources, agricultural or mineral, may be almost entirely independent of climatic conditions, and the plantation, or an organization similar to the plantation where resources other than agricultural are being exploited, may find its place anywhere along the frontiers

¹Ibid., p. 7

²Ibid., p. 10.

³Ibid., p. 11.

of the world community. Exploitable mineral resources are notably distributed with little reference to climate. Colonial Pennsylvania had few plantations, if any, but the organization and operation of her mines resembled plantation organization and operation.¹ Plant life, however, unlike a mineral resource, is closely related to factors in the physical environment, and the natural distribution of the various forms of plant life is limited to the areas where the combination of environmental circumstances makes sustenance possible. Nevertheless, although the natural distribution of particular agricultural staples may be determined or limited by climate, the plantation form of organization and operation itself is not so determined. Eastern Prussia and the so-called Baltic Provinces seem to furnish a case in point.

The lowlands of Eastern Prussia have a very inhospitable climate. In some parts the period of vegetation lasts only from four to five months. Winters are probably more severe than in any other part of Germany. A good part of this territory was reconquered from Slavic peoples after the twelfth century and opened to German colonization. German merchants, knights, and monks were followed by peasant settlers with the heavy German plough. They drove out or subjugated the Slav, who with his light hook plough practiced only primitive methods of agriculture. The German peasant in turn gave way to a form of agriculture

¹"Colonial furnaces (in Pennsylvania) were described as baronial and patriarchal, resembling a feudal holding or a Southern plantation. They were located where forests were within easy reach, and generally had a farm adjacent; with the slaves, white servants, and free laborers, one of these furnaces formed a little settlement. Proprietors of furnaces clamored for Negro slaves, and complained against the enlistment of redemption servants." C. A. Herrick, White Servitude in Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: J. J. McVey, 1926), p. 64.

based upon large landed estates which began to export grain down the Elbe River to Hamburg and even to England. These estates seem to conform to the plantation pattern and have been maintained for over six hundred years.¹

Difference in degree of industrial development as a basis for trade is, of course, a basis subject to change as the frontier comes of age. A more permanent basis of trade is found in the different agricultural products of different climates because differences in climate help to prevent the competition of tropical with temperate agriculture. Such a basis for trade is predominantly north and south in direction rather than east and west.² While exchange between temperate zone areas tends to become more and more specialized, exchange between the tropics and northern markets continues to be one of raw materials for consumers' goods.

The plantation organization of agricultural industry is largely concentrated in the tropical zone, not because of climate, but because tropical regions constitute the most important and most accessible frontier of the world community. They constitute a frontier where there are exploitable resources, mostly agricultural, that are nearer to consuming centers in terms of cost than are the vast areas of sparsely peopled lands capable of producing various kinds of agriculture in the temperate zones.³ The reason

¹Carl J. Fuchs, "The Epochs of German Agrarian History and Agrarian Policy," in T. N. Carver, ed. Selected Readings in Rural Economics (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1916), pp. 223-253.

²The north and south trade is increasing in relative importance. It is the trade of the future, according to J. Russell Smith, Industrial and Commercial Geography (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1913), Part II, Chap. I, "The Laws of Trade."

³O. D. von Engel, Inheriting the Earth (New York, 1922), pp. 265-266.

the plantation predominates where it does is the necessity in those regions of securing a disciplined and dependable labor force. Where the native peoples are not sufficient in numbers or cannot be induced or coerced to supply the necessary labor, laborers are imported as indentured servants, as contract laborers, or as slaves. It is this rather than climate that gives its character to the plantation.

Not only are plantations entirely possible in temperate regions, but small farms characterize large areas in the tropics. Peasant proprietors may occupy the land with a self-sufficient agriculture; they may supply certain subsidiary requirements of adjacent plantations; they may produce the same staple as the plantations, selling to the latter or through the marketing organization which the plantations maintain; or they may market independently through cooperative associations. In the Southern part of the United States planters and small farmers have always maintained close relations. Between them, in the ante-bellum period, there was, according to Dodd, "no real economic competition or rivalry because of the sharp divergence of methods and products."¹ What we have to consider, in reality, is an economic and cultural complex in which either the small farm or the plantation pattern of social relations dominates.²

¹W. E. Dodd, "The Plantation and Farm Systems in Southern Agriculture," The South in the Building of the Nation (Richmond: Southern Historical Publication Society, 1909), Vol. 74.

²Concerning Keller's distinction between farm colony and plantation colony, Isaiah Bowman states in a letter of October 18, 1926, to Robert E. Park: "The question of homestead vs. plantation is undoubtedly important.The limitation of the idea in a study of pioneer belts arises from the fact that the two types of land development may exist side by side. The most important things seem to me to lie back of the two contrasting systems that Keller recognizes rather than in the systems themselves, chiefly because these systems as they work themselves out in a given region vary so greatly from place to

The Plantation as a Type of Settlement

Agriculture is, as Keller points out, the only important primary form of industrial organization common to colonies of all latitudes. Agriculture as compared with mining involves more permanent settlement, but the form which this settlement takes depends upon many factors, such as the availability of capital, labor, markets, transportation, and upon the nature and extent of exploitable resources. It also depends upon traditions, original purposes, and the extent to which these purposes can be realized or have to undergo modification in the actual process of settling and developing an area. When lands are occupied either by conquest, by migration, or by importation of labor, the tendency is to break up the familial and traditional organization of society and to create a proletarian labor class. But sometimes the soil is occupied by religious sects, having a social and moral order which remains intact. In such cases individualization and proletarianization may not take place.

Where migration or invasion brings together peoples of different stocks, different cultural traditions, different races and levels of culture, a period of turmoil ensues, after which a new society with new traditions and a new social order tends to grow up. What arises out of this turmoil, however, is a form of society no longer based on the family but on the territory occupied, a society no longer based on familial piety or custom but on common interests and competition. It is a more secular society.

place [that].... the regional differences in the plantation system are as great as the contrasts between that system and the homestead system. If we go into the homestead areas we shall find very much the same thing true.... So I should say that the idea is a suggestive one but that its limitations are more interesting and important than its applications."

How political institutions have their origin in turmoil and chaos is exhibited in the rise of the Polis in ancient Greece. A passage from The Rise of the Greek Epic by Gilbert Murray describes the conditions under which this fortified city-state arose. It "is the sort of picture," he says, "that we can recover of the so-called Dark Age" when Greece and the whole Aegean area was the terminus of migrations from all parts of the Mediterranean and from the North.

It is a time, as Diodorus says, of 'constant warpaths and uprootings of peoples;' a chaos in which an old civilization is shattered into fragments, its laws set at naught, and that intricate web of normal expectation which forms the very essence of human society torn so often and so utterly by continued disappointment that at last there ceases to be any normal expectation at all. For the fugitive settlers on the shores that were afterwards Ionia, there were no tribal gods or tribal obligations left, because there were no tribes. There were no old laws because there was no one to administer or even to remember them; only such compulsions as the strongest power of the moment chose to enforce. Household and family life had disappeared, and all its innumerable ties with it. A man was now not living with a wife of his own race, but with a dangerous strange woman, of alien language and alien gods, a woman whose husband or father he had perhaps murdered--or, at best, whom he had bought as a slave from the murderer. The old Aryan husbandman had lived with his herds in a sort of familial connexion. He slew 'his brother the ox' only under special stress or for definite religious reasons, and he expected his women to weep when the slaying was performed. But now he had left his own herds far away. They had been devoured by enemies. And he lived on the beasts of strangers whom he robbed or held in servitude. He had left the graves of his fathers, the kindly ghosts of his own blood, who took food from his hand and loved him. He was surrounded by the graves of alien dead, strange ghosts whose names he knew not and who were beyond his power to control, whom he tried his best to placate with fear and aversion. One only concrete thing existed for him to make henceforth the centre of his allegiance, to supply the place of his old family hearth, his gods, his tribal customs and sanctities. It was a circuit wall of stones, a Polis; the wall which he and his fellows, men of diverse tongues and worships united by a tremendous need, had built up to be, the one barrier between themselves and a world of enemies.¹

What we have to recognize in this description of the

¹Gilbert Murray, The Rise of the Greek Epic (Oxford, 1907), pp. 55-57.

chaotic conditions out of which the Polis arose and established order is that it likewise is a description, to some degree, of every frontier. In fact, this is just what we mean by frontier, a place of changing divisions of labor, a meeting point of cultures and of conflicting interests. If the American frontier was not the scene of "constant warpaths and up-rooting of peoples" to the same extent as Gilbert Murray pictures early Greece, the difference was merely one of degree. "... the western frontier worked irresistibly in unsettling population," says Turner, resulting in "that dominant individualism, working for good and evil," which is largely the significance of the frontier in American history.¹

It is in the period of settlement, the period in which there is turmoil and disorder, that the plantation, like the Polis, arises as a means of establishing order, of restoring "the intricate web of normal expectations," and, unlike the Polis, of maintaining industrial and market relations. This double function of the plantation leads to enslavement or other forms of forced labor, to the importation of more individualized, or familyless labor, and to concentrated rather than dispersed settlement.

But the plantation is not the only means of bringing the resources of the frontier into new and higher uses. Where the invading people, the settlers, are able and willing to supply the labor, where the land occupied is used, in the first instance, in producing goods for consumption, there settlement may be achieved with free labor, with the labor of the settler himself. The settler brings his culture with him but does not imp it to

¹Frederick J. Turner, The Frontier in American History (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1920), pp. 30, 37.

any very great extent upon native peoples--presumably peoples with a more elementary type of culture. He supplants them. In such cases the settler tends to descend to the level of the culture of the natives whose lands he is invading. He becomes in America a trapper and a hunter. He may, as in the Appalachian Mountains, revert to a type of society based on the clan and maintain a "blood feud." He is not included in the society based on the world market.¹

These settlers become squatters, or illegal homesteaders. They pass outside the state and for a while, at least, become people without a state. They substitute experience for authority, and when they come to form political communities they regard them as being enacted by themselves; they do not regard themselves as coming from such communities. Competition and democracy become a tradition. Such a society evolved in the American Middle West. The Middle West had little to contribute to world commerce until its wheat fields were opened in the seventies of the past century, and then Cyrus McCormick solved the labor problem by inventing the harvester, but by this time the Middle West had ceased to be a frontier.

Plantation settlement, or settlement where some type of large estate evolves to put land to "higher" use and accommodate diverse cultural elements, involves, on the other hand, forms of forced labor and tends to acquire a feudal organization. Such a result was a fairly rapid one in South America following the Spanish and Portuguese invasions.

"In a sense," says Professor Paul Reinsch, "the South American societies were born old.... The dominance of European ideas in their intellectual life, the importance of the city

¹W. C. MacLeod, The American Indian Frontier (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1928), pp. 357-382.

as a seat of civilization never allowed the pioneer feeling to gain the importance which it has held and still holds in our life. This backwoodsman of South America has not achieved the national and estimable position of our frontiersman."¹

The Plantation and Labor

Some form of forced labor, such as slavery, seems to accompany the first organization of societies on a more complete territorial basis. Slavery arose in Egypt where the first city-states were established. It was an integral element in the organization of the city state and of ancient civilization. Civilization in Egypt began with slavery.²

The conditions under which slavery tends to arise have been most systematically studied by Nieboer.³ Limiting his investigation to ethnological evidence, Nieboer sought to discover where slavery exists among preliterate peoples, what kinds of societies have slaves and what kinds do not have them. In general, slavery is found to be more prevalent among fishing tribes than among hunting tribes, but not important among either. Neither is it important among pastoral nomadic tribes.⁴

Nieboer divided the agricultural societies into three groups. The first group includes those societies in which agriculture holds a subordinate place, since subsistence is derived mostly from hunting, fishing, and sources other than agriculture. Women only are occupied in tillage, and habitations are still

¹Cited by V. A. Belaunde, "The Frontier in Hispanic-America," The Rice Institute Pamphlet, X (October, 1923), 213.

²See A. Moret and G. Davy, From Tribe to Empire, Social Organization Among Primitives and in the Ancient East (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926); W. J. Perry, The Children of the Sun, A Study in the Early History of Civilization (London, 1927), pp. 129-131, 146, 445-447.

³H. J. Nieboer, Slavery as an Industrial System (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1900).

⁴Ibid., Chaps. II, III.

frequently shifted. The tribes of the second group carry on agriculture to a considerable extent, but not to the exclusion of other means of subsistence; they have fixed habitations and lands are generally irrigated. In the third group agriculture is so relied upon that if fishing, hunting, or other sources of subsistence were entirely lacking, there would be little difference in the economic condition. On this level lands are manured, rotation of crops is carried on, domestic animals are used, and agricultural products are exported. It appears that the increasing importance of agricultural production is a condition favorable to slavery, which prevailed among the commercial agricultural groups studied by Nieboer in the ratio of thirty-three to three.¹ The relative importance of agriculture is, of course, an index of the extent to which the principle of group organization is territorial rather than tribal.

The societies keeping slaves are found at each cultural level to live under conditions where subsistence is easy and not dependent upon capital, for the produce of unskilled labor can exceed the primary wants of the laborer. Since everyone is able to provide for himself laborers do not voluntarily offer themselves. Such a society Nieboer calls a society of open resources.

The most important result of our investigation is the division of all peoples of the earth into peoples with open, and with close [sic] resources. Among the former labour is the principal factor of production, and a man who does not possess anything but his own strength and skill, is able to provide for himself independently of any capitalist or landlord. There may be capital which enhances the productiveness of labour, and particularly fertile or favorably situated grounds, the ownership of which gives great advantage; but a man can perfectly well do without these advantages. Among peoples with close resources it is otherwise. Here subsistence is dependent upon material resources of which there is only a limited supply, and which accordingly have all been appropriated. These resources can consist in capital, the

¹Ibid., pp. 174-177, 294-296.

supply of which is always limited; then those who own no capital are dependent on the capitalists. They can also consist in land. Such is the case when all land has been appropriated; then people destitute of land are dependent on the landowners.¹

Among peoples with open resources slavery, serfdom, or modern substitutes for these, are likely to exist, whereas among peoples with closed resources labor is "free." In the one case there are two masters running after one laborer, and the master who succeeds in getting him will probably take steps to hold him. In the latter case there are two laborers running after one master. Men must work for wages and in doing so must compete with their fellow workers, thus reducing wages to a low level, perhaps lower than the cost of keeping slaves. The difference between a situation where employers search for laborers and a situation where laborers look for jobs is just the difference between "forced" labor and "free" labor. Nieboer states the case as follows:

Where subsistence depends on close resources, slaves may occasionally be kept, but slavery as an industrial system is not likely to exist. There are generally poor people who voluntarily offer themselves as labourers; therefore slavery, i.e., a system of compulsory labour, is not wanted. And even where there are no poor men, because all share in the close resources, the use of slaves cannot be great. Where there are practically unlimited resources, a man can, by increasing the number of his slaves, increase his income to any extent; but a man who owns a limited capital, or a limited quantity of land, can only employ a limited number of labourers. Moreover, as soon as in a country with close resources slaves are kept, they form a class destitute of capital, or land, as the case may be; therefore, even when they are set free, they will remain in the service of the rich, as they are unable to provide for themselves. The rich have no interest to keep the labourers in a slave-like state. It may even be their interest to set them free, either in order to deprive them of such rights over the land as they may have acquired in the course of time, or to bring about a determination of the wages of labour by the law of supply and demand, instead of by custom. They will thus, without any compulsion except that exercised by the automatic working of the social system, secure a larger

¹Ibid., p. 420.

share in the produce of labour than they got before by compulsion.¹

Nieboer's theory, based upon his study of slavery among pre-literate peoples, indicates that slavery tends to arise in areas of open resources. In an area of open resources it is necessary to control and incidentally coerce labor in order to bring land into new and "higher" uses. Slave labor is likewise a form of capital with which surplus is produced to bring more land into new and higher uses.

Slavery, then, arises to solve a labor problem, but not labor in the family, and pre-literate society is organized on the basis of the family. Slavery does not flourish in pre-literate society, for the slave tends to be adopted into the tribe or family. Women, in patriarchal society, are the original industrial laborers, the first slaves, and male slaves captured from other tribes are made to do woman's work.²

The Plantation as a Political Institution

Slavery as an industrial system does not impress itself on the form of society until the rise of the city and the city-state.³

Theories of the origin of the state differ, but do not so much contradict as qualify and supplement one another. The essential problem in all of them is that of the transition of a society based upon the family and the sacred ties that bind it to the soil, to the mother country.

¹Ibid., p. 421.

²W. C. MacLeod, "Economic Aspects of Indigenous American Slavery," American Anthropologist, XXX (1928), 640.

³See Park and Burgess, Introduction to the Science of Sociology (2nd ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1924), p. 665.

Teggart points out that such a principle of organization as that resting upon kinship and embedded in tradition and religion would not, of course, be rationally and voluntarily given up.¹ Oppenheimer, following Gumplowicz, has systematically developed the thesis that the state historically arose with the conquest and forceful imposition of the authority of a nomadic people upon a sedentary and agricultural people.² The superior power and morale of the conquerors allow them to appropriate the energies of the conquered, who are bound to the soil and made slaves or serfs. Social and economic interaction within this state later tend to soften and limit the harshness of slavery or serfdom. The state originally begins its career as a large estate, and, Oppenheimer believes, the large estate may prove the last stronghold of the principle of exploitation which the state embodies.³

In short, as Oppenheimer conceives it, the state is also an institution of settlement for the purpose of putting land to new and higher uses. In the process, not duty, filial piety, but the common interests of individuals occupying a common territory become the controlling factor in social organization.⁴

The division of labor which exists between women

¹Teggart, op. cit., p. 85.

²Franz Oppenheimer, The State: Its History and Development Viewed Sociologically. Tr. by J. M. Gitterman. (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1914), pp. 27-81.

³Ibid., p. 282.

⁴The change to the new principle in Greece is illustrated in the poet Hesiod's advice to cultivate good terms with neighbors: "they are better friends than relatives, for if help is needed, a neighbor will come running in his shirtsleeves, while a relative will stop to put on his coat." Quoted by Howard Becker, Ionia and Athens: Studies in Secularization, Ph. D. thesis, University of Chicago Library, 1930, pp. 33-34.

(including slaves) and men in preliterate society takes the form of a division of classes with the introduction into this economy and society of subject races and peoples. Classes tend to assume the form of caste when the divisions of labor become more or less fixed. These classes and castes are, first, the laborers, and, second, the rulers (administrators). The rulers live in the city (the citadel) and the workers are on the land. The citadel becomes the guardian of the market place, where goods are exchanged. The rulers levy taxes and guarantee protection of traders as well as of agriculture and the agricultural laborers. The division of classes tend to become at the same time a division of labor between city and country.¹

Conquest enlarges the boundaries of the territory which the city and the citadel dominate and protect. A conquering people, if there is conquest as there usually is, occupy the citadel and the conquered people on the soil merely change masters.²

When conquest takes place the conqueror becomes a King, not a tribal chief merely, and a feudal system is established. The essence of a feudal system is loyalty, not to a family, but to a leader or a territorial ruler who "possesses" the land. When the land is conquered the people who live on it are transferred with it to the rule of the conqueror. Nationalism grows up when, as in the case of Frederick the Great, the ruler arms the peasants and leads them to defend the soil they occupy. In

¹See P. A. Sorokin, C. C. Zimmerman, and C. J. Galpin, ed. A Systematic Source Book in Rural Sociology (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1930), I, Chap. III. "Origins of Rural-Urban Differentiation."

²W. Z. Ripley, The Races of Europe (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1919), p. 29. See Robert E. Park, The Immigrant Press and Its Control (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1922), pp. 21-23, for evidence of this in the distribution of European languages.

the case of the Poles, the peasants were regarded merely as an indispensable appanage of the soil, which was owned and ruled by the nobles. Not until after the partition of Poland was the Polish peasant regarded as a national and encouraged to be patriotic.¹

The gradual accumulation of incidents and variations of the sort which Oppenheimer describes in the evolution of the state leads, according to him, to the establishment of constitutional and public law, and of capitalism, in short, of the structure and artefacts that we call civilization. At the same time Oppenheimer states that relations between conquerors and conquered are softened and humanized. He apparently makes no distinction between these processes as they operate in the state and in the large estate. The large estate is regarded, apparently, as a sub-multiple of the state, or as the state in miniature. It is probable, nevertheless, that the process in which public and constitutional law develops accompanies the organization of society over wider areas, and is an impersonal process that operates in the larger state.² On the large estate the modification of relations is likely to be the result of more direct human and personal interaction between lord and peasantry. Oppenheimer describes this humanizing process as follows:

Gradually more delicate and softer threads are woven into a net very thin as yet, but which, nevertheless, brings about more human relations than the customary arrangements of the division of spoils. Since the herdsmen no longer meet the peasants in combat only, they are likely now to grant a respectful request, or to remedy a well grounded grievance. 'The categorical imperative' of equity, 'Do to others as you would have them do unto you,' had heretofore ruled the herdsmen only in their dealings with their own tribesmen and kind.

¹William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, The Polish Peasant in Europe and America (Boston: Richard G. Badger, 1920) Vol. IV, Part II, Chap. VI, "The Role of the Peasant in National Life."

²Park and Burgess, op. cit., p. 793.

Now for the first time it begins to speak, shyly whispering in behalf of those who are alien to blood relationship. In this, we find the germ of that magnificent process of external amalgamation which, out of small hordes, has formed nations and unions of nations; and which, in the future is to give life to the concept of humanity.¹

The effect of more human relations, of patriotism for a fatherland and of a religion which teaches brotherhood, is to prepare the way for another culture which contains a new domestic principle of organization. To the extent that this takes place the state is maintained by evolving into its opposite--a homogeneous cultural group.

The Theory of the Plantation

The plantation is an incident in the conquest, settlement, and exploitation, politically and commercially, of an invaded country. It is an incident, if not of the origin, at least in the expansion of the state, that is, of the territorial organization of society.

The plantation arises in areas of "open" resources as a means of controlling settlement, of preventing the dispersion of labor energy, and of concentrating it in the exploitation of the resources through the medium of a staple agricultural crop.

Under what conditions and circumstances do the resources of an area become open? Nieboer has answered this questions with respect to pre-literate groups. But we may suppose that at the level of pre-literate culture resources are open only in exceptional cases and do not remain open long. From Malthus to Carr-Saunders we have been impressed with the fact that the population problem among pre-literate peoples is as serious as it is among civilized nations. Certain customs such as infanticide and abortion are and have been extensively practiced by every so-called

¹Oppenheimer, op. cit., p. 67.

primitive group.¹ They are not practiced sporadically but strictly and regularly with much public feeling against their contravention; the elimination or prevention of excess population is a fact of constant operation. This leads to the important conclusion that, under a given state of resources and culture, there is an "optimum" population at which point numbers remain more or less stationary.²

It is evident that in a situation where population pressure against resources is so great that measures such as infanticide and abortion are sanctioned in the mores, the resources, at that particular level of culture, are closed, either economically or politically.

Resources are not open to a people who utilize the country up to the limit of their capital and technical means. Migration, however, may serve to introduce a group with new (superior) uses for the resources of the area and superior capital and methods for exploiting them. To the invading group the resources

¹"No matter in what quarter of the world we look, wherever there are native races one or more of these customs is practiced except where native customs have been destroyed by European influence." A. M. Carr-Saunders, Population (London: Oxford University Press, 1925), p. 16.

²"In any country at any given time there is a certain amount of skill and knowledge available and there are certain habits and customs which govern the use made of this skill and knowledge. Taking all these conditions into consideration, then it is clear that there is a particular density of population which must be reached and must not be exceeded if the largest possible income per head is to be obtained.there is for any piece of land, when a certain amount of skill is available, a point where, by the application of a definite amount of capital and labour, the maximum return per head is reached; if less is applied the return per head will again be less, and if more is applied the return per head will again be less, though in this latter case the total produce will be greater. So in any country, however many complications may be introduced by the rise of industrialism and the exchange of manufactured articles for food grown abroad, there is a density of population which is more desirable than any other from the point of view of income per head. This may be called the 'optimum' density." Ibid., pp. 26-27.

are open; closed to one group, they become open to another. Oppenheimer's herdsmen were men of superior power and morale, as compared with the sedentary people whom they conquered, but enslavement would scarcely have benefited the conquerors if the labor of one slave could produce no more than enough to barely sustain the slave, much less his master. It is necessary for the conqueror to introduce new methods to obtain a greater surplus as well as the power to enforce these methods upon the conquered. This probably is why Nieboer found slavery to be progressively more important in proportion as fixed habitations with higher agricultural methods became more important.

The invasion of a new area, however, is not always military. Indeed, in the present world community, the conquest of the city, and therefore of the country, is likely to be by a group which wins control of the market news and of the exchanges. Boundaries are enlarged by the migration of capital, speculative capital, as Alvin Johnson calls it, which invades the moral and cultural regions found "east of Suez."¹ These regions are to the holders of capital seeking investment, regions of open resources, regions where the mineral, agricultural, and labor resources of culturally inferior peoples may be made available to civilizations that, presumably, have superior uses for them.² If such capital

¹"Capital thrives best in a settled order of society, where the risks of loss are at a minimum. It accepts favors from government, to be sure, but politics is no part of its game; peace, and freedom from disturbing innovations, are its great desiderata. Speculative enterprise, on the other hand, thrives best in the midst of disorder. Its favorite field of operations is the fringe of change, economic or political. It delights in the realm where laws ought to be but have not yet made their appearance.... Politics, thus, is an essential part of the game of speculative enterprise." Alvin Johnson, "The War--By an Economist," Unpopular Review, II, 420-421.

²"It somehow shocks the sense of fairness of hard-headed white and yellow people that semi-savages should be driving

is not able to evolve its own controls, however, it may be supported by military force.

The resources of an area, therefore, become open in the relationship between two cultures. Whatever form the invasion may take it is necessary, in understanding the outcome, to take into account the traditions and purposes of the invaders. Differences in traditions and purposes will mean differences in the form of politicization. Behind the agricultural missions of the Jesuits in Paraguay or of the Dominicans in the Philippines, for example, were religious traditions and purposes. Behind the Spanish plantations of the West Indies were purposes which did not contemplate colonization by white Spanish laborers but only by aristocrats who were to be granted lands and natives forthright. Negro slavery was not an evolution in the Spanish West Indies, as in Virginia, but was imported full-grown when the Indian population began to decline in numbers.

Where there is no outside market, the labor for exploiting the resources may be obtained by attaching the natives to the soil and exacting tribute from them in the form of ground rent. In this way the manor (Grundherrschaft) arises. If there is a large metropolitan market, resources may become open through the medium of the most profitable staple, whether agricultural or not. When it is an agricultural staple requiring routine labor in its production, the plantation (Gutsherrschafter) is likely to result.

ill-bred sheep, scraggy cattle or ponies hardly fit for polo over plains and mountains that are little less than great treasure-vaults of valuable minerals and chemicals; or that they should roam with their blow-pipes and bows and arrows through forests of inestimable value for their timber, drugs, dyes, latices, gums, oil-seeds, nuts or fruits; be turning this wealth to no use, nor allowing it to circulate in the world's markets." Sir H. H. Johnston, The Backward Peoples and Our Relations With Them (Oxford, 1920), p. 59.

Steady dependable labor is scarcely to be obtained from natives whose tribal culture resists the new habits unless their tribal culture can be broken down by force. But even where there is no moral objection to this by the invading group it may, nevertheless, be too expensive.¹ Unless it is broken down the native tribesman is valueless for plantation labor. In all plantation regions the native is described in similar terms--he is lazy, worthless and unreliable. An initial effort may be made to employ him but he is too free, too unaccustomed to the routine of steady industry, too near his family or tribe, too near familiar forest and streams, too difficult to force because too difficult to render dependent.²

¹See W. C. MacLeod, "Big Business and the North American Indian, American Journal of Sociology, XXXIV (November, 1928), 480-491.

²The following was written by an adventurer who attempted to establish a coconut plantation on a small South Sea Island. After experiencing a good deal of difficulty in clearing the land and in getting a native tribe to work, his laborers suddenly decided to stop work altogether. It was just when victory was approaching that they announced their intention of going away.

"Must go for walk-about," one explained shortly when, aghast, I offered remonstrance.

"Must have spell from hard work too much," grunted another.

"I stormed at them, and threatened, saying that if they went I would never employ them again, that I would bring labourers from some other part of the coast. They made no answer, but stood staring sullenly, one or two muttering, and some so fingering their spears that I thought it best to let them see I had my revolver in my pocket, as I always had.

"Then I spoke to them softly, and, pointing to the plantation, begged that they should not leave me just as the fruit of our recent hard laborings was in sight; and asked had I not been a good master to them, giving them in plenty of the good things in my store; and drew their attention to the fact that if they went away they would have none of these good things, and would miss them very much.

"And still they stood there, a sullen, silent crowd, the women by gestures hushing their children, the men scowling up at me, the dogs sniffing in and about the array of thin, black legs.

"Then I turned to Mary Brown, who had come from the kitchen, and stood behind me at the head of the veranda steps. I told her to point out to them in their own language and in her own way the folly of their leaving me, to use all the arguments

For this reason "speculative capital," seeking to exploit the resources of an area through an agricultural staple, tends to rely upon imported labor which can be rendered dependent upon the employer and thereby held to steady industry. Recruited and imported labor is, by reason of the very conditions under which it is obtained and distributed, individuated labor rather than group labor. In the course of controlling it for industrial production the plantation assumes the character of a political institution, an institution whose principle of organization is territorial rather than tribal.

The extent to which some form of personal compulsion is necessary in the plantation exploitation of resources may be observed in different regions where such compulsion is abolished

she knew to induce them to stay, to do her best for me, as often she had done her best for me before. Then I stood back and made room for her to speak to the sullen, silent crowd on the ground.

"But Mary, who had never failed me before, failed me now. She made no speech to those on the ground, but looked at me earnestly a while, and hesitatingly and stumbly said that they would have to go--and that she would have to go with them.

"It was the fashion for natives to go for 'walk-about,' she said, in the manner of one who excuses, but does not intend to allow the excuse to interfere with a fixed determination. Always had they been like that. Always, she repeated. With white men it was different. White men could stay long times in one place. But with natives, their eyes came tired of looking always at the same things. And their feet came tired walking always on the same ground. And their bodies came tired from sleeping always in the same camp. They wanted to look at other places, walk on other ground. They would have to go. Yes. They would go to a place three days' walk down the coast. And she would go with them, because she was one of them, and felt the same as they did--though her heart was sore that she should leave me, and the heart of Willie, her husband, was sore too, and she would like to stay, only only

"I watched them out of sight, and, till the sinking of the sun was done, stared at the empty beach. Then I looked at the deserted camp and the wavering smoke of one of its dying fires, and at a rain squall sweeping up with a great rustling of leaves, and around my quiet and lonely house; and I wondered if, after all, there was anything so tremendously self-satisfying in being a Settled and Respectable Person." Jack McLaren, My Crowded Solitude (New York: Robert M. McBride and Company, 1926), pp. 94-97.

by outside interference. Such an opportunity is afforded by comparing the results of emancipation of slaves in the various regions of the British West Indies. In the densely populated island of Barbados, for example, where all land had long since been appropriated entirely, emancipation made little difference in the control of the former Negro slaves. They were simply employed at moderate wages not exceeding the former cost of maintenance. On the other hand, the abundance of fertile land not in plantations in Jamaica, Trinidad and British Guiana made it possible for the emancipated Negro to live without the necessity of regular work on the plantations, and their continual withdrawal into the interior left the planters with a steadily diminishing labor force. To meet the situation planters in these British colonies sought Hindu coolies from India who were introduced under terms of indenture for a fixed number of years.¹

It is thus in close relation to the resources of a frontier area that the plantation arises. The factors in its formation are those which have to do with the traditions and purposes

¹Herman Merivale, Lectures on Colonization and Colonies (London: 1841). Lecture XI, pp. 304ff. The habit of steady industry which the Barbadian Negro has been forced to maintain has given him a reputation for thrift throughout the Caribbean area, whereas the Haitian and Jamaican Negroes, in those two islands, are reputed lazy and worthless for plantation labor. "A rich field of investigation awaits the sociologist," says J. Russell Smith, "who will hasten to study the Haitian negro before American control controls him too much and compare him with his Barbadian brother, who considers himself the aristocrat of the West Indies. He boasts of the fact that Barbados has never been anything but a British possession. He is proud of his neat home and his perfectly cultivated bit of earth. Two-thirds of his children between the ages of five and fifteen are in school" North America (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1925), p. 739. Transplanted to other plantation areas, however, the Haitian and Jamaican Negroes seem to work well enough under stringent control. The investment of American capital in plantations in the West Indies is distributing them over the Caribbean area, where their transportation is referred to as the slave trade. Carleton Beals, "The Black Belt of the Caribbean," The American Mercury, XXIV (October, 1931), 129-138.

behind it, the development of its staple, the establishment of its market, and the controls which it introduces or evolves to concentrate and manage labor. In the process it becomes something like a state substituting common interest based upon locality and proximity for the ties of totem and blood.

The Plantation and Social Change

The plantation is an institution of settlement, a frontier institution. This means that the plantation is a transient institution and is involved in a cycle of change.

Society always is in a process of change. Discussion of social change is concerned, first of all, with what it is that changes. If it is agreed that biological changes are not very important in social change, then we may say that the fundamental changes are in human relations, and in so far as these relations can be stated in their most abstract terms, that is, in terms of time and space, their changes may be subject to objective measurement or description comparable to the description of processes of change in a plant community. To state the case in terms of relations is to state it in terms of position and changes of position, i.e., of succession.¹

Once a social order is established individual initiative, working within the limits which this order imposes, constantly modifies it in the interest of the individual. This aspect of succession is evolutionary.

Institutions change at a different rate from the individuals who compose them. Individual habits change first; customs and forms change more slowly. Interest and attitudes of individuals constitute the content of customs and social forms. As the social order imposed by the institution gets established in custom and in the mores, it creates divergent attitudes of those who want to preserve it and humanize it and of those who seek to escape from, overthrow, or replace it with some other system. It is

¹Robert E. Park, "A Spacial Pattern and a Moral Order," in E. W. Burgess, ed. The Urban Community (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1926), p. 4.

because one class regard it as a vested interest and another class is seeking to escape, that the institution has sufficient instability to permit change at all, or at least great and sudden change. Eventually the content bursts the traditional forms.¹

The result is that institutions pass through a cycle of evolutionary changes, punctuated with catastrophic changes in the formal and traditional order. These catastrophic changes mark the periods of epochs in the natural history of institutions and societies. This series of catastrophic changes we may describe as institutional succession. The succession of formations in a plant community illustrates their nature.

Succession in a plant community, according to plant ecologists, begins with the invasion of a bare area by pioneer plants competent to survive under the extreme conditions presented by the bare area. In adjusting to the extreme conditions, however, the pioneers effect a reaction upon the habitat itself, changing one or more of its factors in some degree. The reactions of the pioneer stage may produce conditions unfavorable to the survival of the pioneers but favorable to the invasion of new plant forms better able to utilize the area and so become dominant. The series of stages involved in plant succession proceed with the progressive interaction of habitat and invading life-forms which achieves final stabilization in a climax association, at which point the relationships between habitat and life-forms constitute a community closed to invasion by another dominant life-form.²

The natural history of the plantation community seems to

¹Cf. Teggart, Theory of History, Chap. XII, "Events in Relation to the Study of Evolution."

²F. E. Clements, Plant Succession and Indicators (New York: The H. W. Wilson Co., 1928).

follow much the same cycle of change. It, too, appears to arise in a "bare area," i.e., an area of open resources, after the way has been prepared by pioneering forms of economy. The plantation in turn prepares the way for further population invasions, a greater division of labor, and a more complex and resistant culture. The more or less extreme conditions of the frontier are modified as resources, even under the superior cultural uses of the newcomers, tend to become closed. Population increases, social relations become established, soil fertility diminishes, competing areas in the production of the staple crop arise, and changed market relations may lead to a more intensive agriculture. With these changes there seems to go a trend toward peasant proprietorship. Another change in market relations, the discovery and cultivation of a new and more profitable staple, a new invasion by foreign capital and superior methods may, however, interrupt the cycle at any point and start it over again.¹

In more general terms, the territorial organization of society, the consequence of a process of politicization, involves an extension of the division of labor and the multiplication of artefacts--structure. It is the existence of this structure--including the division of labor--that we ordinarily call civilization.²

¹In the West Indies may be found the end of one cycle and the beginning of another. The small farms in some of the British islands, formerly the scene of large plantations, are assisted by cooperative marketing, rural credits, agricultural extension education, and other measures fostered by the government. In the islands owned or dominated by the United States the highly efficient plantation with modern machinery and methods operates with imported Negro labor from Haiti and Jamaica. Carleton Beals, op. cit., p. 132.

²"Civilizations are the most external and artificial states of which a species of developed humanity is capable." Oswald Spengler, The Decline of the West, Tr. by C. F. Atkinson (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1929), p. 31.

The structure of this secular society arises out of an order imposed upon peoples of diverse races and cultures who have experienced a "release," as Teggart puts it, from the bonds of old group relations. Normally, however, these individuated persons tend to be re-incorporated into a new set of relations and a new culture. If civilizations, as Spengler says, grow up at the expense of existing cultures, they at the same time prepare the way for the development of new cultures.

But it happens, particularly in inter-racial situations, that there are factors which prevent the re-integration, or assimilation, of some individuals, at least at the same rate of speed. It is just in this connection that the biological fact of race mixture, where the races are culturally defined as virtually different species, has highly important consequences. The members of the various racial groups in such a situation get their conflicts settled by some more or less tolerable working arrangement with each other. But the appearance of the so-called "marginal man," who in this situation is a mixed-blood, introduces one whose lot it is to be permanently individuated because he is unable to incorporate himself in a system of relations, in a culture, in which there is no defined place for him. He is held, as it were, in a state of prolonged suspension overshadowing the system of relations in which others are at home. If he is unable or unwilling to "pass," or change himself, nothing remains except to agitate for a change whereby the system of social relations may be ordered in such a way that he, too, can feel at home. The marginal man shows that the settlement of people, unlike the ecesis of plants, is finally a subjective fact.¹

¹Park, "Migration and the Marginal Man," in Burgess, ed. Personality and the Social Group.

Virginia as a Typical Plantation Frontier

It is the purpose of this study to apply our theory of the plantation to a particular area. The plantation in Virginia affords an excellent opportunity for this purpose, for there the institution arose and seems to have passed through a complete cycle of change.

With respect to the history of the plantation in this particular area it is necessary to distinguish between two historically related meanings embodied in the term "plantation."

To the people of Elizabethan England, and before, the word had reference to an assisted migration of people with a view to settlement. In this sense writers of the period spoke of the "plantation of Ireland" and the "plantation of America."¹

The acute need which England had long felt for timber gave rise to a good deal of propaganda designed to stimulate arboriculture, "the art of forming plantations of trees." The opening sentences of Bacon's essay "On Plantations" reveal this use of plantation to mean the transplantation of men like trees, both requiring capital that could afford to wait for returns upon

¹In Murray's New English Dictionary a number of uses of the term plantation are given. Perhaps these are due to the wide meaning assumed by the infinitive to plant and its extensive use by the people of medieval England. The most obvious use of the word denoted the placing of plants in the soil that they might grow. It was in this sense that Aaron's rod was described by a writer in 1450 as having "fructified without plantaciouns." It was easy to extend this use to the act of establishing or founding anything as, for example, a religion. Thus Bacon speaks of "those instruments which it pleased God to use for the plantation of the faith." Or it might refer to a settlement of people as in Coverdale's Bible translation: "I will appoynte a place and will plante (Vulgate plantabo) them, that they maye remayne there." With this use of the verb the noun might refer to a group migrating or being transported (and transplanted): "Ascanium.... carrying forth a plantation of men.... found a white sow with 30 pigges sucking her." (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909), Vol. VII, Part II, pp. 952-953.

the investment.

Plantations are amongst ancient, primitive, and heroidal works. When the world was young it begat more children; but now it is old it begets fewer; for I justly account new plantations to be the children of former kingdoms. I like a plantation in a pure soil; that is, where people are not dis-planted to the end to plant in others. For else it is rather an extirpation than a plantation. Planting of countries is like planting of woods; for you must take account to lease almost twenty years profit, and expect your recompense in the end.¹

The second historical meaning of the term, the one which is a commonplace in American tradition, is that of a relatively large estate with feudal characteristics producing agricultural products entirely for a market. The transition from a verbal to a substantive meaning occurred in all the English settlements along the American coast and took some interesting variations. Thus in Maine and New Hampshire it became the official designation of an unorganized and thinly settled division of a county. In the state of Delaware it is a legal term for an oyster-bed in which the oysters have been artificially planted. In Virginia and the West Indies, plantation became a large agricultural estate. Plantation as transplantation gave rise in these two areas to the plantation as an institution.

The genesis of the plantation of Virginia, and of the plantation in Virginia, is to be sought in the changes which occurred in what amounted to a revolutionary change in spacial relations between England and Virginia following the Period of the Discoveries. This revolution in distance, as measured in knowledge, time, and cost of transportation, shifted the ecological position of England from a place on the periphery of Europe to the center of an evolving world community. The same forces which brought about the shift in position were responsible for

¹Francis Bacon, "On Plantations," Works (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1881), II, 194.

a certain amount of internal instability and relative overpopulation. Virginia, with great unused natural resources, was relatively unpopulated. Attempted relations projected along the lines of past English experience in dealing with overseas countries through trading factories proved inadequate. Unexpected conditions imposed modifications in original purposes and eventually changed these aims entirely.

The relationship between England and America constituted tidewater America into an area of open resources, but in the exploitation of these resources diminishing returns set in fairly early on account of physical difficulties in placing them on the market. In New England the soil was occupied by a religious group having a social and moral order which remained intact, so that extensive individualization did not take place. In the absence of a staple agricultural export a self-sufficing economy developed, characterized by the small farm, the town, and free labor.

Virginia, on the other hand, was settled by male adventurers who sought wealth and not homes in the New World. The discovery of tobacco proved to be a staple which could stand the expense of transportation to England and yield a profit. Moreover, the market was capable of great expansion. Control of production in its own interest by the Virginia Company failed because of the difficulty of long distance communication, and the resident planter arose as a responsible agent for the employment of English capital in the production of tobacco.

The need for labor was now transferred from Company to planter. Unable to coerce the tribal Indian, the planter became an immigration agent importing white indentured servants whose wages he virtually paid in advance. His method of controlling

such labor was necessarily by lengthening the period of servitude, by corporal punishment, or both. Negroes introduced into the colony originally assumed the customary status of indentured servants, but an accumulation of incidents led to slavery as a customary and, finally, a legal relation. The slave trade developed from the economic and legal relation and introduced the harshest features into the system only to be modified and humanized again by the establishment of new customary relations. While Negro slavery was in process of evolution a white planter class developed simultaneously.

The plantation which arose as a political institution in settlement, both in Virginia and the West Indies, now became an institution for settlement. The increasing demand for cotton, the industrial revolution in England, the invention of the cotton gin in America, the surplus capital in the form of slaves, the soil and climatic resources of the South, and relatively easy transportation by means of rivers and the Gulf of Mexico all combined to constitute "the South" into an area of open resources. The plantation moved southwest with the advance of the frontier, exhibiting its greatest activity along the frontier and undergoing changes as the frontier moved on. Before emancipation the presence of the free Negro was an index of these changes.

The conditions under which the plantation arose in Virginia have perhaps undergone the greatest changes of all the plantation communities of the United States, for the frontier there has more completely passed away, and with it the plantation. Virginia, today, is predominantly a state of small farms.

POPULATION EXPANSION AND THE PLANTATION SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT

The plantation is a political organization of the frontier existing for the purpose of securing co-operative and unified action among peoples of diverse races or cultures in the production of an agricultural staple which usually is sold on a world-market. The history of the plantation begins with the migrant stranger who becomes a planter where there are undeveloped agricultural resources, where there is or can be created a market and in which a profit will be realized, where the stranger can acquire possession or control of the land at points favorable to transportation. The typical plantation society passes through different stages of which the succession forms a cycle. Alienation of the land and settlement by a new population are primary stages. The importation of plantation labor is usually "collective" migration. The laborers are predominantly male or familyless. In the second generation the sexes are fairly equalized and there is a moving away from the individual to the family as the labor unit. The new source of labor supply is provided by the children who are born within the community. The plantation family group tends to acquire some equity in the land which it works and the crops which it produces. A system of peasant proprietorship tends to replace the plantation system. The change is marked by the passing of the plantation village and the dispersion of families out upon the land, by the rise of trade towns, multiplication of local division of labor, greater diversification of agriculture, and the tendency to develop co-operative societies. This is the final stage of the plantation cycle.

III

Since the plantation is an institution of the frontier, its history is bound up with that of the frontier. This implies that it is a transient institution. The typical plantation society passes through different stages, of which the succession forms a cycle. In the history of agriculture generally, there seems to be discernible a rhythm in the form of land tenure and land utilization. Politically controlled large estates alternate with small units operated by peasant proprietors. Hence we may speak of a plantation cycle to be described in several stages.

The history of the plantation begins with the migrant stranger, although, of course, not all migrant strangers start plantations. In the land of his birth the individual is more or less lost in a continuity with tribe, nation, and natural environment; but on the frontier, where he is forced to make his way outside of former group relations, there is for him no stable social order the values of which must be

preserved. The stranger there is "released" from the yoke of inherited usage and set free to scheme his own life independently.⁷

The characteristics of the stranger on the frontier all flow from this fact. He is, in the first place, more secular-minded than the natives of the area because he does not participate in their sacred traditions. He therefore sees opportunities in the local situation that the natives do not see, but he sees them in terms of the economic and cultural values of the society from whence he comes. Resources will not be exploited even by a stranger whose mother society does not put a premium upon those resources. It is important to emphasize this fact. A country becomes "backward," resources become either "open" or "closed,"⁸ only in the relationship between two cultures.

Closely associated with the individualism and the secular-mindedness of the stranger are the characteristics of acquisitiveness and aggressive self-assertiveness. Acting for himself, he tends to regard the landscape and other individuals with primary reference to his own purposes. In the advancement of these purposes he not only becomes a law unto himself, but also in some degree a law unto others.⁹ The result is the simultaneous achievement of private property and political authority.

Now, the nature of the industrial and political institution which develops from the activities of the stranger will depend upon the age in which he lives; the nature of his strength, whether military or capitalistic, or both; the situation in which he finds himself; the purposes which he undertakes to execute; and the conditions which impose modifications in these purposes. He may become a West Indian pirate, a sheep-farming squatter of Australia, a *conquistador* in Mexico, a gang lord in the city, or a mahogany-lumberer in Honduras. The planter is simply another variant of the same general type.

The independent and purposeful individual, properly equipped, with proper connections, and operating in a certain situation, pre-

⁷ F. J. Teggart, *Theory of History* (New Haven, 1925), p. 196.

⁸ H. J. Nieboer, *Slavery as an Industrial System* (2d rev. ed.; The Hague, 1910), p. 418.

⁹ The lawless owner of a frontier plantation in Brazil, "may himself represent the law to the ruder societies or individuals about him" Isaiah Bowman, *The Pioneer Fringe* (New York, 1931), p. 299.

cedes the plantation. The plantation arises as his personal "possession," and it is from his standpoint that the course of its development is directed. He must have in his tradition a higher use for the resources of the area than have the natives. In the world-community the stranger who acquires possession of resources and exercises authority must have other sources of strength than mere physical force. Not only must he have a knowledge of superior methods for exploiting the resources but also the waiting power to continue operations until returns from the sale of the product begin to come in. In other words, he must have capital, or be a responsible agent for the employment of the capital of others. Again, the stranger in overseas territory who becomes a planter does not break with his home society to the extent that he loses all connections with it. The maintenance of connections through friends, relatives, or business principals is essential for financial and marketing operations.¹⁰

The stranger becomes a planter, first of all, in a situation in which there are undeveloped agricultural resources for which there is, or can be created, a market. It must be a commodity, however, the sale of which will pay the cost of production and transportation to consuming centers and yield a surplus for profit. This will depend upon the position of the area with respect to other areas of both consumption and competition in the world-community. Another important factor in the situation, to be expected from what has already been said, is the fact that the natives will not themselves produce the staple at all, or only in insufficient quantity or quality, or irregularly.

It is a situation, too, in which the stranger can acquire possession or control of the land at points favorable to shipping the crop. But for the stranger who becomes a planter, rather than a squatter farmer, the mere seizure of the land with the right to settle it is not enough. Labor, far more than land, is, in the absence of machine methods, the great need. As a final factor in the situation, then, there must be present a body of potential laborers over whom the stranger can assert a control which may be based upon force where it is difficult to get men to work under his direction for wages, or for

¹⁰ Among the earliest plantations in the New World were those established by exiled Portuguese Jews in Brazil. These Jewish planters not only possessed capital but had friends and relatives in the home country who were indispensable in marketing the crops. See Werner Sombart, *The Jews and Modern Capitalism* (London, 1913), especially pp. 32-47.

wages which he can afford to pay when there is competition with other employers for laborers. Slavery, indentured labor, and other forms of forced labor are devices for artificially altering the disproportion which unoccupied land bears to people. They are devices for rendering people dependent upon a capitalist or landlord rather than directly upon the resources of the area. When, finally, the stranger becomes master of a body politic and uses his authority for the purpose of producing an agricultural staple for the market, he is established as a planter.

In his need for labor it is natural for the planter to turn first to the natives of the region. Now when the purposes of the stranger on the frontier change from trade or subsistence farming to industrial agriculture, his attitudes toward the natives likewise change. Where the object is trade, the attitude may be altogether friendly and co-operative. But when it is the land or the labor of the natives that is wanted, the stranger's attitude toward them will, in all probability, be quite different. The effort to employ natives on the plantation results in a judgment which is expressed in the same terms in practically all plantation areas—they are lazy, worthless, and unreliable. These are, it is locally assumed, inherent qualities of the natives; but they are, in fact, easily understood and explained. Steady, dependable labor is scarcely to be expected from natives whose tribal culture resists the new habits. This is especially true where people are disposed to live and to shape their acts by contingencies alone; where the easiest way to live is to do the thing only when nature brings it to be done. And even if, in the new economy, natives are given equal opportunities for advance, which is unlikely, they have no traditions of success in it. Its rewards are, from the standpoint of their own culture, not rewards at all. To incorporate the natives into the new economy, their tribal culture must somehow be broken down. But it is easier, quicker, and probably cheaper to import laborers from without.

The planter's characteristic solution of the problem of the "lazy native," who will neither work nor trade, by transporting or importing laborers from other parts of the world begins another stage in the plantation's life-history. Historically, as has been shown, it was the organized labor migrations from the Old World to the New, incident to this stage, which gave the name "plantation" to the institution

and defined its essential character, i.e., as an industrial army of occupation. A review of the facts relating to the migration of laborers for plantation work during the last century or so would reveal the important part played by the plantation in redistributing population even in the modern world-community. It is possible that the greater part of overseas migration during this period has been for plantation purposes.

The conditions under which plantation labor is recruited and imported determine the main characteristics of the migration. It is not usually group, but individual or "collective," migration.¹¹ The recruiting of a large number of unskilled laborers is largely a problem of securing labor as cheaply as possible. This tends to preclude family groups, especially where the laborers are transported considerable distances. The laborers are thus predominantly male, or, at least, familyless. In addition, the conditions of their recruitment are usually such as to promote racial and cultural diversity.

It is in the settlement of such a migration of assorted individuals that the peculiar features of the plantation appear; the form of the settlement reflects its political and social structure. In the process of clearing land, building roads, constructing houses, and ploughing fields, a frontier area is transformed into a human habitat. The planter may regard it as necessary also to build a church and perhaps a school. Entirely incidental to his main purpose he may find himself the owner and head of a community, a landlord and merchant, as well as an operator. The result is a form of settlement which gives the planter power over the lives and fortunes of any number of other settlers. The laborer's home is bound up with his job, and both are directly dependent upon the planter. The workers do not commonly live outside the estate, the land of which they cultivate, but upon it; and the conditions and arrangements of life and recreation, as well as of work, fall to a very large extent within the bounds of the territory possessed by the planter, and hence are subject to his authority. With the plantation, as with the state, the dominance of the ruler over people may be expressed as dominance over territory.

At any rate, the plantation becomes, in its second stage, an agency for introducing into an area an alien population. The natives are

¹¹ John W. Brown, *World Migration and Labour* (Amsterdam, 1926), p. 2.

pushed aside and segregated upon less desirable lands.

When it eventually ceases to be profitable or possible to continue the importation of adult laborers to replace those who have, for various reasons, been eliminated, the plantation reaches another stage in its natural history. Although the imported laborers are predominantly male, there are usually enough women, either native or of the races of the laborers, to produce a generation of children. Born to the situation, the second and succeeding generations tend to accept it; but the changed situation brought about by their very presence has the effect of modifying the plantation in fundamental ways. In the second generation the sexes, being fairly equalized, tend toward the development of a more normal family life among the laborers. With this there is a movement away from the individual to the family as the labor unit, and the new source of labor supply becomes the children who are born within the community.

This may be called the "stage of home-grown labor." From the standpoint of the planter, the second generation presents a special problem of control. Slavery, by defining in advance the status of the offspring of laborers, has been one solution. Child labor enforced by parents, rather than directly by the planter, because of low living standards and wages, is another. Perhaps this stage is best studied in the materials on education in colonial areas because of the close relation between labor control and educational traditions and policies. Ordinarily, the plantation community consists of a literate planter class superimposed upon an illiterate working class. Education for the laborers may be opposed by the planter, not only because he will have to pay for it, but because it might "contemn those drudgeries for which they were born." On the other hand, education may be accepted as a means of inculcating submissiveness and of training the working class in ways and habits of industry which may be a positive advantage to the planter. But unless controlled and directed, education is undoubtedly a force which leads the second generation away from the plantation.

The rise of the family as the labor unit within the structure of the plantation involves a fundamental reorganization of the institution. The married pair requires a separate house, and the birth of children turns this into a home; home life is dependent, for one thing, upon some measure of privacy and isolation. The family seems to develop

solidarity to the extent that it acquires property, and family status becomes bound up with the increase of material possessions. The tendency is for the plantation family labor group to acquire some equity in the land which it works and in the crops which it produces. It begins to push up through the plantation and to divide it into farms—family farms. Perhaps the plantation becomes little more than a shell whose owner, now resident in the city, collects rent but does not direct the farm operations of the peasant families. They are left to do this for themselves. Events may make it possible for these families to acquire the ownership of their farms; but whether they do or not, a system of peasant proprietorship tends to replace the plantation system. Objectively, the change is marked by the passing of the plantation village and the dispersion of families out upon the land. It is marked, further, by the rise of trade towns, by the multiplication of local divisions of labor, by greater diversification of agriculture, and by the tendency to develop co-operative societies. This is the final stage in the plantation cycle.

IV

In summary, then, an institution like the plantation which originates under conditions of racial and cultural heterogeneity and depends upon this heterogeneity for its continuance inevitably undergoes transformation as the society becomes homogeneous. But there are catastrophic, as well as evolutionary, factors in the process. The stranger, to begin with, is what Teggart would describe as an "intrusive" factor whose activities give a new direction to the area in which he operates. And because laborers not only interbreed with each other but with their masters of another race, there may appear the class of individuals which Park has called "marginal men."¹² Education, as well as mixed birth, may also produce this class of individuals. Unable to incorporate themselves into a situation where there is no defined place for them, unable to change themselves, nothing remains except to contrive to change the system of social relations in such a way that they, too, can feel at home in it. Their agitation may speed up the process I have described, or give it a more revolutionary character.

¹² Robert E. Park, "Migration and the Marginal Man," in E. W. Burgess (ed.), *Personality and the Social Group* (Chicago, 1929), pp. 64-77.

Finally, the whole process goes on within the context of the world-community. Changes in fashion and diet, new economic wants, new inventions, new forms of transportation and communication, war and depression—all vitally affect the plantation's career because they affect the market upon which it depends. The plantation cycle may be lengthened or shortened; or a change in market relations, the discovery and cultivation of a new and more profitable staple, a new invasion by foreign capital and superior technical methods, may interrupt this cycle and start it over again. In the West Indies may be found the end of one cycle and the beginning of another. The small farms in some of the British islands, formerly the scene of large plantations, are assisted by co-operative marketing, rural credits, agricultural extension, and other measures fostered by the government. In the islands possessed or dominated by the United States, the highly efficient plantation with modern machinery and methods operates with imported Negro labor from Haiti and Jamaica.¹³

It is, of course, understood that in particular plantation societies the life-cycle described is subject also to modification by peculiar local factors. Mauritius, for example, has never had a stage of native labor because the island was uninhabited when discovered. All these intrusive and local factors must be taken into account; but in any particular plantation society where the institution does not appear to be developing typically, we have a basis for asking questions with a view to isolating and evaluating them.

¹³ Carleton Beals, "The Black Belt of the Caribbean," *American Mercury*, XXIV (October, 1931), 132.

